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Inside Information

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INSIDE INFORMATION is published for distribution to public affairs and information staff members of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, its agencies, State Departments of Agriculture and Land Grant Universities. Individual items are sent electronically throughout the month to offices on the agricultural information network. These items are then printed at the end of the month for distribution to all offices, including those which do not have access to electronic mail. Any items, comments or inquiries should be sent to Denver Browning, Editor, Information Technology Management Staff, Office of Public Affairs, Room 536-A, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250, or send to Browning's FTS2000 (AT&T) mailbox !A13DBROWNING, or call at 202-720-2058. Communicators with USDA Agencies, Land Grant Universities and State Departments of Agriculture are encouraged to submit items to the editor for inclusion in both the electronic and printed versions.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Although timely in the electronic version, some job announcements may reach you too late in hard copy due to the shortness of deadlines. Our policy is to include all electronic items in the end-of-month hard copy.

USDA'S CSRS HAS AN OPENING FOR DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

There is an opening in USDA's Cooperative State Research Service (CSRS), Office of the Administrator, for a GM-301-14 Director of Communications. Announcement number is CSRS-92-819.

Duties include developing and managing the CSRS comprehensive communication and public affairs program, including ongoing interpretation of agency policy regarding communications efforts.

Qualifications include one year of specialized experience equivalent to the GS/GM-13 level in federal service, and specialized experience which is in or directly related to the line of work of the position to be filled which has equipped the applicant with the particular knowledge, skills, and abilities to successfully perform the duties of the position.

Contact: Delicia Taylor, USDA, CMS, PMSD, Room 3552-S, Washington, DC 20250-0089. Telephone 202-690-0089. Closing date is August 10.

**TRUMAN'S AG SECRETARY DIES OF HEART AILMENT IN DENVER**

Charles F. Brannan, who served as President Truman's secretary of agriculture from May 1948 to January 1953, died in a Denver, Colorado hospital on July 2 of a heart ailment. He was 88.

Brannan, who was trained as a lawyer but was an Agriculture Department official by profession, was no simple bureaucrat. Rather, he was a champion of the family farm. He became an aggressive apostle of the Roosevelt-Truman farm program.

After he stepped down as agriculture secretary, The Washington Post hailed Brannan's "competant and honest leadership." The Brannan Plan attempted to cope with the farm surplus problem by promoting consumption.

Brannan returned to his native Denver, after leaving USDA, and practiced law until his death. He served as general counsel of the National Farmers Union until about 1990.

He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Eda.

**NEW DIRECTOR NAMED FOR USDA'S INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS**

John C. Datt has been named Director of the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs in USDA's Office of Public Affairs.

He replaces Gwen Bronson who was named to the position on January 6, 1992, and left at the end of June. Bronson had replaced Larry Werries who served in the position from October 1989 to June 1991.

Prior to coming to USDA, Datt served as executive director of the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) Washington office since January 1985. He joined the AFBF staff in Washington as assistant director of the fruit and vegetable commodity department in 1950, becoming director of the department in 1953. In 1957, he began his legislative career in the Farm Bureau being named assistant legislative director.

He was named director of the AFBF Washington office in 1976, and continued in that role until his appointment as secretary and administrator in 1979. He served in that post with the AFBF and its affiliated companies in the Park Ridge, Illinois, headquarters and Washington offices from March 1979 until January 1985.

Datt is a member of the American Agricultural Economics Association, the Washington Food Group, The Commodity Club, and the Brookings Agriculture Roundtable.

In 1990, Muskingum College and Pennsylvania State University honored him for his services to American agriculture. In June, he received the Distinguished Alumni Award from Muskingum and in September, he was named a Penn State Alumni Fellow.



USDA RADIO REPORTER-PRODUCER WINS TOP NEW YORK AWARD AGAIN

Gary Crawford, a reporter and producer in the Radio and Television Division (R&TV) of USDA's Office of Public Affairs, recently won the Silver Medal -- the top award given at the New York International Radio Festival. This is the second time he has won the top award.

The festival is a competition in which entries are judged not only for journalistic qualities, but product value as well. For radio programming people it equates to the "Oscars" of radio.

This year 1,481 entries from 35 countries were submitted. Fewer than 10 percent won awards. Crawford says, "I got lucky!" Competition came from all over, including the United States, Canada, Australia, and the British Broadcasting Corporation.

Crawford's entry, "The Bacteria Caper," was one of R&TV's weekly "Consumer Time" series mini-documentaries -- this one on food safety.

He says, "After doing the standard food safety interview with USDA home economist Susan Conley, I decided to jazz it up a bit by using her answers in a 1940s style detective story with her as the detective's client. Writing, editing, sound effects, and music helped complete the illusion."

Crawford, who has been with R&TV for 18 years, spends most of his time covering news events, hunting stories, interviewing people, writing news and features, editing tape, and sound mixing.

**USDA'S FAX-ON-DEMAND DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM MOVES NEWS FASTER**

In March 1991, USDA's News Division established Ag NewsFAX. The fax-on-demand news distribution system provides instant access to USDA news releases and other news materials anywhere, at any time.

In simple terms, Ag NewsFAX combines telephone, fax, computer, and voice menu technologies enabling reporters to select the exact USDA news releases they want and receive them immediately on their fax machines. Ag NewsFAX is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Prior to Ag NewsFAX, USDA's News Division used a number of methods to distribute releases from messenger delivery service that was costly, to mailing releases which was not timely. By the time they were printed, labeled, sorted, and mailed, two or three weeks had elapsed before reporters received them.

Ag NewsFAX consists of a computer fileserver, eight voice-fax cards and software that makes it all work. Eight callers can reach the system and retrieve news items simultaneously. Releases are copied from PCs to the fileserver within minutes of their being handed to reporters in the USDA building and are immediately available on Ag NewsFAX.

Ag NewsFAX provides lists of release titles and their numbers. The primary list is a "daylist." The computer creates and updates this list as releases are added to the system throughout the day. Each daylist is available for 30 days. Lists are also created for all releases issued each month and for releases in various subject areas, such as commodity programs or natural resources and environment.

Ag NewsFAX documents look much like printed news releases. They have a news logo on printed releases except it says "Ag NewsFAX" instead of just "NEWS." Releases are double-spaced the same as printed releases. Since the system sends electronic files directly from the computer, quality of faxed material is high.

After a year of operation, the system is working just about the way News Division envisioned it and, in some ways, better. They plan to add more categories of information, including news materials in Spanish, and they also hope to increase the number of calls that can be handled at one time.

Ag NewsFAX isn't perfect and it's not the end-all solution for USDA's news distribution, but according to News Division Deputy Chief Diane O'Connor, "For those reporters throughout the country who use USDA news releases, it's fast, inexpensive, easy-to-use, and reliable."

For more information, contact: Diane O'Connor at 202-720-4026.



RETIRED ARS ENTOMOLOGISTS RECEIVE THIS YEAR'S WORLD FOOD PRIZE

Edward F. Knipling and Raymond C. Bushland, two entomologists retired from USDA's Agricultural Research Service, were recognized this year with The World Food Prize. They were named 1992 Laureates for having given the world an environmentally friendly means of eradicating insect parasites that threaten the world food supply, and for their contribution in sustaining vast sources of food, especially livestock and wildlife populations.

The largest prize given for accomplishment in food and agriculture will be awarded at an October ceremony in Des Moines, Iowa. The winners were announced on July 17 during the International Crop Science Congress held at Iowa State University.

The World Food Prize, founded in 1986, is the foremost international award recognizing outstanding individual achievement in improving the quality, quantity, or availability of food in the world. It is sponsored by The World Food Prize Foundation in Des Moines, established by John Ruan.

The Prize includes a cash award of \$200,000 and both winners will receive a sculpture by world-renowned designer Saul Bass. This is the first time the prize has been shared by more than one recipient.

For further information, contact: Dean Plowman, 202-720-3656.



PENN STATE PUBLISHES NEW SHRUB AND TREE DISEASE POCKET GUIDE

A new pocket guide, "Scouting and Controlling Woody Ornamental Diseases in Landscapes and Nurseries," has been published by Penn State University's College of Agricultural Sciences.

The 90-page booklet, slightly larger than a checkbook, is authored by Gary W. Moorman, Penn State associate professor of plant pathology. It uses conversational language and more than 100 detailed color photographs to show nursery owners, landscapers, and homeowners how to spot and treat diseases on popular trees and shrubs. A list of references is included that can help business people and homeowners with more extensive problems.

The booklet is available for \$7.00 through local county cooperative extension offices or the Publications Distribution Center, 112 Agricultural Administration Building, University Park, PA 16802. Call 814-865-6713.



USDA SPECIALIST SELECTED FOR CONGRESSIONAL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

James C. Borland, a senior computer specialist with the Information Technology and Resource Management Staff of USDA's Office of Public Affairs, has been selected to serve in the Congressional Fellowship Program sponsored by the American Political Science Association (APSA). The Program begins in early November and will conclude in August 1993.

Of the 22 federal executives selected as "Federal Fellows" in a national competition for the 1992-93 program, Borland is the only USDA employee named. Winners were selected in a government-wide competition on the basis of professional experience, career goals, and interest in national politics and the legislative process.

Sponsored by the APSA since 1953, the Congressional Fellowship Program gives outstanding federal employees, political scientists, journalists, and medical faculty an opportunity to acquire a rich understanding of the legislative process. The participants will serve as professional staff assistants to U.S. senators and representatives for nine months.



TO METRIC OR NOT TO METRIC ... THERE SEEMS TO BE A QUESTION

Do people want to switch to the metric system? Apparently a lot of people in the United States are prolonging such a switch.

In its 1988 Omnibus Trade Bill, Congress gave 39 federal agencies until the end of fiscal 1992 to convert to the metric system. As of January 1992, fewer than a third had complied to the order, according to the metric office at the Department of Commerce, which monitors agency conversion plans.

All countries in the world, except the United States and two others, have adopted the metric system. Despite efforts to convert the federal government to metric, the public and industry have not been convinced that a switch is for the best. And, the Education Department has not jumped on the bandwagon, so schools are part of the problem. If the system isn't taught in school when people are young, it will make a change more difficult. Not many people want to learn a complete new system at an advanced stage in their lives, so it may be a long time before we all go metric.



FORMER ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE DIES IN TEXAS

George L. Mehren, an assistant secretary of agriculture in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, died of bone marrow disease in San Antonio, Texas. He was 79.

Mehren, whose work in USDA helped lead such nutritional programs as Food for Peace and food stamps, developed national nutrition programs for children.

He was a professor of agricultural economics for many years at the University of California at Berkeley, and chairman of the university's Giannini Foundation for Agricultural Economics.

Mehren was a special ambassador for Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, a U.S. delegate to the Office of Economic and Commercial Development in Paris, and served on the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission and the board of the Commodity Credit Corporation.

Later, he was head of the Agri-Business Council of New York, president of the American Milk Producers, and editor of the Journal of American Marketing.



FFA STATE OFFICERS GATHER IN WASHINGTON FOR CONFERENCE

More than 100 state officers of the National Future Farmers of America (FFA) Organization gathered in Washington, D.C., for the 25th Annual State Presidents' Conference, July 27 to August 1. Headquarters for the conference was the Crystal City Marriott Hotel in Arlington, Virginia.

These young agricultural leaders of tomorrow, from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, represented the 400,746 FFA members from all 50 states.

The conference provided the officers with a variety of experiences including Congressional visits, discussions of important agricultural and educational issues, and tours of major sights around the Washington, D.C., area.

FFA is a national organization of agriculture students preparing for careers in agricultural marketing, processing, communications, education, horticulture, production, natural resources, forestry, and agribusiness. FFA chapters are established in public schools where they are an integral, extracurricular part of instruction in agriculture under provisions of the National Vocational Education Acts.

For more information, contact: National FFA Center, 703-360-3600.



NEW DIRECTORY AVAILABLE FROM NAL’S AQUACULTURE INFO CENTER

The Aquaculture Information Center at USDA’s National Agricultural Library has published a directory of 139 U.S. and Puerto Rican institutions involved in aquaculture research. It lists addresses of the institutions and the type of research being conducted.

The "Directory of Research Institutions in Aquaculture" was created for aquaculture scientists and researchers, students, government agencies, and others interested in current areas of research in aquaculture. It was compiled from information provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Sea Grant College Program, and the American Fisheries Society.

Copies are available by sending a self-addressed mailing label to: Aquaculture Information Center, NAL, 10301 Baltimore Avenue, Beltsville, MD 20705-2351.

Contact: Brian Norris, 301-472-2966.



UPCOMING COMMUNICATION EVENTS AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

August 11:

NAT'L ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATORS WORKSHOP

Topic: "How To Best Use Radio in a Public Service Campaign"

Speaker: Stever Murphy, North American Network

NIH, Main Campus N., Bldg. 31C, Conference Rm. 7, Bethesda, Maryland

Contact: Ben Cromer, 202-619-0084

September 14 - October 30:

ADVANCED WRITING AND INTERVIEWING TWO-DAY WORKSHOPS

Calgary, Canada, Delta Bow Valley Hotel, September 14-15

Vancouver, Canada, Hotel Georgia, September 17-18

San Francisco, California, Sir Francis Drake Hotel, September 21-22

Los Angeles, California, Hyatt at LA Airport, September 24-25

Denver, Colorado, Radisson Hotel, September 29-30

Detroit, Michigan, The Dearborn Inn, October 8-9

New York, New York, Hotel Dorset, October 12-13

Washington, D.C., Wyndham Bristol, October 15-16

Chicago, Illinois, The Talbott Hotel, October 19-20

Columbus, Ohio, Holiday Inn-Airport, October 21-22

Boston, Massachusetts, Back Bay Hilton, October 26-27

Whippany, New Jersey, Marriott's Hanover Courtyard, October 29-30

Contact: Effective Communications Group, 201-444-3147

September 29 - October 2:

CD-ROM EXPO SHOW

World Trade Center, Boston, Massachusetts

Contact: 800-945-3313 or 617-361-0817

October 21:

AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATORS IN EDUCATION LUNCHEON

Speaker: Betty Debnam, Editor of The Washington Post's Mini-Page

Valley Room, USDA Administration Building

Contact: Kathryn Hill, 202-690-4750

January 14-16, 1993:

NAGC 1992 NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS SCHOOL

Old Colony Inn, Alexandria, Virginia

Contact: Debbie Trocchi, 703-519-3902

May 8-12, 1993:

AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATORS IN EDUCATION INTERNAT'L MEETING

Theme: "ACE '93, Discover New Worlds"

Hotel Intercontinental on Biscayne Bay, Miami, Florida

Contact: Donald Poucher, 904-392-0437 or Thomas Hintz, 904-392-5180



